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Department of State **EXCISE** **TELEGRAM**

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INFO NSCE 00,CIAE 00,SSO 00,DODE 00,USIE 00,NSAE 00,SP 02,SS 20,
GPM 03,SC 01,NSC 10,RSC 01,L 03,H 02,SAH 03,SAL 01,IO 21,P 04,
INR 07,AID 30,RSR 01,/128 W

P R 2406:0Z OCT 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9452
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 4704
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 2877
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANG 1215

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY [signature] DATE 1/26/82
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 9390

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUBJECT: LOWER HOUSE ELECTIONS: THE WINNERS IN BINH DINH

REF: A. SAIGON 9069 B. SAIGON 6837

1. REFTEL REPORTED ON THE ELECTION RACE IN POPULOUS II CORPS PROVINCE OF BINH DINH, WHERE SIX SEATS WERE AT STAKE AND SIXTY CANDIDATES IN CONTENTION. DESPITE THE LARGE NUMBER OF CANDIDATES AND THE ERRATIC FUNCTIONING OF THE LOCAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE (REFTEL), THE RACE WAS HOTLY CONTESTED

(1)

WITH WINNERS EMERGING REPRESENTATIVE OF THE POLITICAL INTEREST GROUPS IN THE PROVINCE.

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2. THE WINNERS:

A. THE GREATESE SURPRISE WAS PROVIDED BY NGUYEN HUU THOI, 34, BINH DINH LEADER OF THE KY BO VNQDD FACTION, WHO CAM IN FIRST WITH 41,646 VOTES, WELL AHEAD OF HIS NEAREST COMPETITOR. THOI IS SECRETARY OF THE BINH DINH ELEMENT OF THE VNQDD (KY BO) FACTION, WHICH HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH THE ALL-VIET NAM BLOC. THE BLOC, WHOSE UPPER HOUSE SLATES DID POORLY, IS APPARENTLY NOT PUBLICLY ENDORSING CANDIDATES FOR THE LOWER HOUSE BUT THERE IS PROBABLY SOME CONNECTION BETWEEN THOI AND THE BLOC. (INTERESTINGLY, ON OCTOBER 19 VIET-NAM PRESS PUBLISHED AN ASTONISHING ENDORSEMENT OF THOI AND ANOTHER VNQDD CANDIDATE IN BINH DINH, BUI LONG THIEN. THEY WERE CHARACTERIZED AS HAVING A "GREAT CHANCE" OF VICTORY BECAUSE OF THEIR ADMIRABLE RECORDS, WHICH ARE CITED AT LENGTH. DIRECTOR OF VIET NAM PRESS IS NGUYEN NGOC LINH, WHO IS A LEADING LIGHT IN THE ALL VIETNAM BLOC. ALTHOUGH THIS PARTISAN ENDORSEMENT BY AN OFFICIAL GVN PUBLICATION OF CANDIDATES MIGHT BE EXPECTED TO DRAW CRITICAL

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COMMENT, TO OUR KNOWLEDGE TO DATE IT HAS NOT.)

B. TRAN LOC, VC, 31,730 VOTES. CATHOLIC, PROBABLY ENDORSED BY GREATER CATHOLIC SOLIDARITY FORCES. LOC WAS A LOCAL OFFICIAL IN BINH DINH UNDER DIEM AND A CAN LAO PARTY MEMBER; DESPITE THESE ASSOCIATIONS WHICH ARE FREQUENTLY CAUSE FOR OPPROBRIUM FROM NON-CATHOLICS, LOC IS FONDLY REMEMBERED IN BINH DINH AS AN OUTSTANDING ADMINISTRATOR AND FOR HIS FAIRNESS TO NON-CATHOLICS. HE WILL BE AN ASSET IN THE LOWER HOUSE. THERE IS CONSIDERABLE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON LOC.

C. NGUYEN DONG, AKA NGUYEN THUONG DONG AKA ONG DONG BUNG, 57, WITH 31,758 VOTES. DONG, A LOCAL CIVIL SERVANT, IS POLITICALLY INDEPENDENT. HE IS ALSO WIDELY ADMIRED FOR HIS HONESTY AND ABILITY. HE CAMPAIGNED STRONGLY AGAINST CORRUPTION AND TO INCREASE AND ACCELERATE COMPENSATION FOR WAR DAMAGES. DONG WAS IMPRISONED UNDER THE DIEM REGIME.

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D. NGUYEN VAN PHUNG, 58, 30,138 VOTES. PHUNG IS FROM NGHE AN, IS NORTH CENTRAL VIET NAM. HE IS A RETIRED CIVIL SERVANT CURUNFNTLY ACTIVE IN BUDDHIST AFFAIRS AS A MEMBER OF THE PRO-TRI QUANG BINH DINH UNITED BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION.

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E. DOAN DINH DUONG, 45, WITH 29,442 VOTES. DUONG, A BUDDHIST, WAS BORN IN HUE. DUONG WAS REPORTEDLY IMPRISONED FOR TWO MONTHS BY THE VIET MINH IN 1945 OR 1946 BECAUSE OF ORGANIZATIONAL WORK IN SOC TRANG IN THE DELTA. SINCE AT LEAST 1952 HE WAS ASSOCIATED WITH NGO DINH DIEM IN VARIOUS CAPACITIES, SOME OF THEM BELIEVED NOT TO HAVE BEEN PUBLIC. HE ADMITS TO FORMER MEMBERSHIP IN CAN LAO PARTY, AND WAS A NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEPUTY FROM 1958-63. IN 1957-59, DUONG WAS VICE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT BINH DINH PROVINCIAL SECTION AND ALSO REPORTEDLY CHAIRMAN OF THE BINH DINH BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION. DESPITE HIS ACTIVE DIEMIST RECORD, DUONG APPARENTLY RETAINED THE SUPPORT OF THE BINH DINH UBA DURING THIS ELECTION; NGUYEN GIA PHUOC, THE RESPECTED SECRETARY OF THE LOCAL UBA AND A CLOSE FRIEND OF DUONG, EVEN ACCOMPANIED HIM ON CAMPAIGN SORTIES WITHIN THE PROVINCE.

F. LE VAN DIEN, 41, 22,640 VOTES. DIEN IS A CATHOLIC, NATIVE OF BINH DINH, AND LIKE LOC A FORMER MEMBER OF THE CAN LAO. HE ALSO PROBABLY ENJOYS BACKING FROM THE CATHOLIC GREATER SOLIDARITY FORCES.

HE WAS DISTRICT CHIEF OF AN NHON DISTRICT, BINH DINH, FROM 1955-56 AND THEN CHIEF PROVINCIAL SECURITY OFFICIAL UNTIL 1963. WHEN THE NATIONAL SALVATION MOVEMENT SWEPT OVER BINH DINH IN 1964 DIEN, WHO HAD LED THE

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OPPOSITION TO THE NSM, WAS THROWN IN JAIL. HE HAS MANY ENEMIES IN THE PROVINCE.

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